



# COMMUNITY BASED RESILIENCE ANALYSIS (CoBRA) | IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES VERSION 2

## Global Policy Centre on Resilient Ecosystems and Desertification

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Community Based Resilience Analysis (CoBRA)  
Implementation Guidelines - Version 2  
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## ACRONYMS

- CoBRA** Community-Based Resilience Analysis
- DDC** Drylands Development Centre
- FGD** Focus Group Discussion
- KII** Key Informant Interview
- M&E** Monitoring and Evaluation
- NGO** Non-Governmental Organization
- SD** Supporting Document
- SPSS** Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
- UNDP** United Nations Development Programme



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# GUIDE TO SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The CoBRA Implementation Guidelines are supported by numerous supporting documents (SDs), which provide tools, reporting formats, and other helpful information to aid each step in the CoBRA implementation process. They include:

No.	SD Title	CoBRA Phases/Steps to use SD
<b>SD1</b>	Sample Outline of a CoBRA Assessment Plan	Phase I Step 2
<b>SD2</b>	Indicative List of Resources Required for CoBRA Assessment	Phase I Step 2
<b>SD3</b>	Members of a CoBRA Assessment Field Team	Phase II Step 3
<b>SD4</b>	CoBRA Assessment Field Team Training Indicative Schedule	Phase II Step 3
<b>SD5</b>	CoBRA Assessment Field Team Training Guide	Phase II Step 3
<b>SD6</b>	CoBRA Sampling Frame Guidance Note	Phase II Step 3
<b>SD7</b>	Sample Outline of a CoBRA Assessment Logistics Plan	Phase II Step 3
<b>SD8</b>	Sample Outline of a Post Field Team Training Report	Phase II Step 3
<b>SD9</b>	FGD Recording Sheet	Phase II Step 4a
<b>SD10</b>	Graphics for FGD Section 3 Scoring	Phase II Step 4a
<b>SD11</b>	Indicative List of Resilience Statements	Phase II Step 4a
<b>SD12</b>	KII Recording Sheet	Phase II Step 4b
<b>SD13</b>	FGD Data Entry Sheet	Phase III Step 5
<b>SD14</b>	KII Data Entry Sheet	Phase III Step 5
<b>SD15</b>	Sample Outline of a CoBRA Assessment Report	Phase III Step 6





# INTRODUCTION

## BACKGROUND

The frequency, duration and extent of natural hazards and man-made crises are on the rise at the global level. This challenge has put the humanitarian system and resources under considerable pressure in the past decade. Climatic shocks and protracted conflict-related stresses often take a toll governments and communities' development efforts in many countries.

In this context, the concept of resilience has become particularly compelling for both development and humanitarian actors. Theoretically, "building resilience" offers the promise of helping households, communities and broader systems to "bounce back" or "bounce back better" from the negative effects of catastrophic events, whilst maintaining opportunities for growth and sustainable development.

Despite the implied potential, the process of identifying where and how to build resilience in practice remains largely elusive as different organizations have different understandings and interpretations of the term. It encompasses multiple sectors and dimensions. In addition, several important aspects such as governance or ecosystem health are not easy to quantify. Furthermore, mapping and measuring the interplay among diverse and constantly changing components adds yet another complication to the process. Due to the lack of consensus and consistency in terms of what resilience means and how to measure resilience, it is difficult to objectively monitor and verify the success (or failure) of numerous ongoing resilience building initiatives.

The methodological framework of Community-Based Resilience Analysis (CoBRA) was developed originally by the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Drylands Development Centre (DDC) in 2012 with the attempt to address the above gap. Inter alia, it aimed at complementing the scientific/technical expert-led resilience research, planning and programming efforts by bringing in views and voices of local communities and households on what interventions and services they believe have (or would) best build their resilience.

## OBJECTIVES OF A COBRA ASSESSMENT

CoBRA is a qualitative participatory resilience assessment methodology. Overall, CoBRA's main objectives are to:



Identify the locally specific factors contributing to the resilience of communities and households that face different types of shocks and stresses



Identify the features and strategies of the households that have proven resilient



Identify the types of interventions or services that have most assisted the affected communities in building local resilience

Key principles or benefits of the CoBRA methodology include, among others:

- CoBRA does not attempt to use any preconceived components or indicators of resilience. The participatory nature of the approach brings communities' perspectives into the debate. It provides the shocks/stresses-affected populations with an opportunity to describe and explain resilience on their own as a community and as individual households based on their practical past experiences.
- A CoBRA assessment identifies a relatively short list of local drivers of resilience (or non-resilience), compared to other models that attempt to map many more dimensions of resilience. This enables development and humanitarian practitioners to design more context-relevant interventions and promote more evidence-based, cost-effective resource allocations. Comparative analysis of the CoBRA results from different locations helps determine which resilience drivers are uniquely contextual in specific community(ies) and/or applicable across wider regions.
- The approach aims to learn from positive experiences by identifying the households perceived to be already resilient and examining what those households have or do differently, that enabled them to bounce back (better) from past shocks or stresses. This evidence-based approach significantly improves our understanding of what resilience looks like in reality.
- CoBRA assessment provides a substantial amount of information in a relatively short period of time and at significantly less cost than equivalent quantitative approaches. This is due to the participatory approach, which involves collaboration with local government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), who also provide technical and logistical backstopping support. The generic nature of the CoBRA findings and results will be useful not only for the government but any development and humanitarian actors working in a community. Consequently, there are significant opportunities to share costs if government and NGOs work together to undertake a CoBRA assessment.



## PURPOSE OF THE COBRA IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

The CoBRA Implementation Guidelines have been developed to support organizations interested in undertaking the CoBRA assessment. Such organisations could include governments, NGOs and UN agencies. Ideally the assessment should be undertaken by multi-agency teams, to avoid bias in community response and reiterate the multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder nature of resilience.

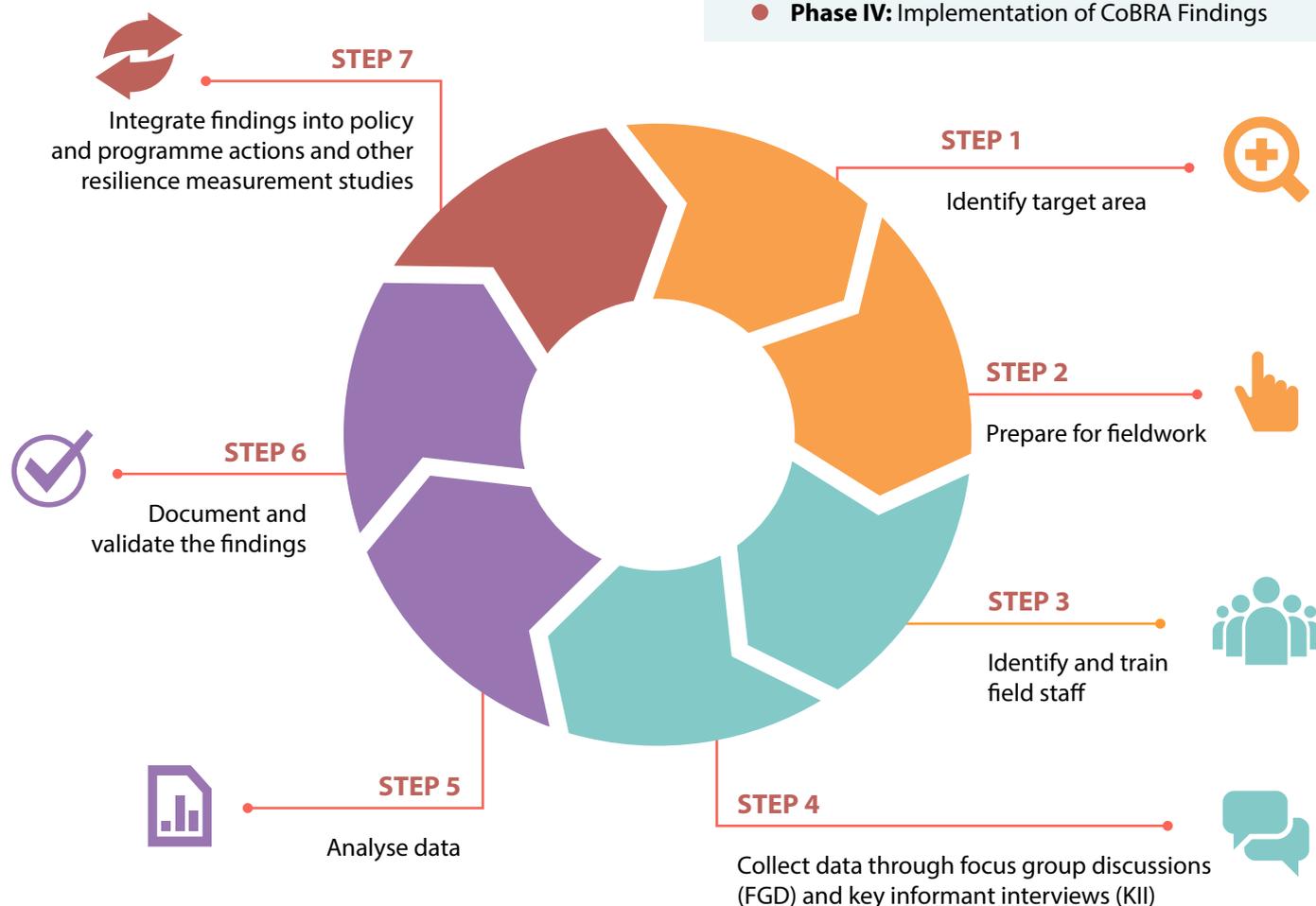
The guidelines build on the methodology section of the CoBRA Conceptual Framework and Methodology and provide more detailed and practical guidance. A CoBRA assessment comprises three phases, which are further broken down into a series of logical steps as shown in Figure 1. In the following sections, the guidelines outline at each respective phase and step:

- Issues the assessment team needs to consider and address;
- Specific activities to be undertaken by the assessment team; and
- The outputs to be generated at the end of the step upon completion of particular activities.

The guidelines also provide a comprehensive set of data collection tools and formats, i.e. SDs, as annexes. They support implementers at each step in collecting field data, undertaking initial analysis and presenting findings etc.

### CoBRA Phases and Steps

- **Phase I:** Preparation
- **Phase II:** Field data collection
- **Phase III:** Data analysis and reporting
- **Phase IV:** Implementation of CoBRA Findings



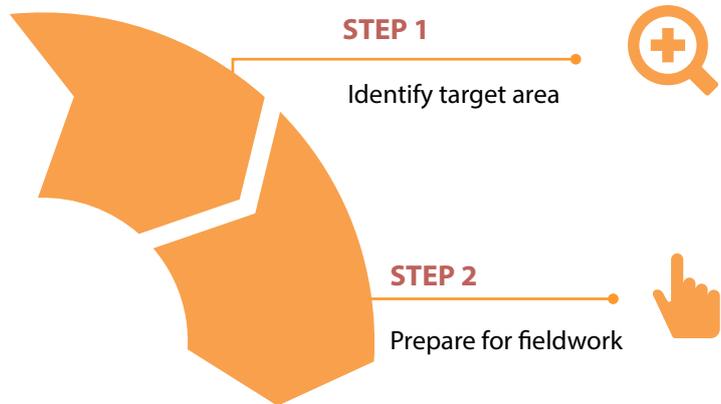
**Figure 1** | Phases and Steps in Undertaking a CoBRA Assessment



# PHASE I: PREPARATION

The preparation phase comprises two steps to:

- Select the target communities where the assessment is to be conducted; and
- Undertake necessary technical and logistical actions, such as identifying the CoBRA assessment team partners and developing the detailed plans for the field data collection, before the fieldwork



## STEP 1: IDENTIFY TARGET AREA

### What do you need to consider?

- Which area should be targeted and why?

### What do you need to do?

- Agree on the lead and supporting agencies for the assessment team
- Identify the target populations and livelihood zones to be assessed

### What is the output of this step?

- CoBRA assessment team formed with clarification of lead and supporting partners
- Target assessment area and populations confirmed

### Supporting Documents:

- N/A

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO CONSIDER?



### Which area should be targeted and why?

In selecting the communities for a CoBRA assessment, two issues need to be considered: 1) geographic coverage of the communities and populations to be assessed; and 2) current perceptions of resilience (or non-resilience) in these communities. An agency or a group of agencies planning to undertake the assessment should consider why a particular geographic area is being assessed, e.g. based on political/administrative boundaries or a livelihood/agro-ecological zones. Ideally the area selected should be covered by ongoing monitoring processes. This means that the findings emerging from CoBRA can be easily compared to, and cross-referenced with, existing socio-economic, environmental and other datasets. The assessment team should thus continue collection/review of existing literature on the target area throughout the CoBRA process to promote cross-comparison among studies.

The agencies must also consider why the communities are currently perceived to be non-resilient. Normally, an area is selected for a CoBRA assessment because it is affected particularly by a certain type of shock and/or stress. Given that there are currently no universal or widely accepted indicators of resilience, it is worth looking at observable factors or other symptoms that exist to indicate non-resilience in the target communities. They could include, for example, the proportion of the population receiving humanitarian assistance, categorized as food insecurity or malnutrition. Such information will be useful in designing the CoBRA assessment and considering how the CoBRA findings reinforce or contradict these factors/symptoms.



## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?



### Agree on the lead and supporting agencies for the assessment team

CoBRA is a tool to map out the contextual drivers of resilience in a holistic and multidimensional manner. The CoBRA findings will thus be highly relevant to a wide range of actors operating in the target communities across organizational and sectoral lines. These actors may wish to jointly undertake the CoBRA assessment. Formation of a multi-agency team helps avoid the bias in responses from communities and households to respective CoBRA assessment questions that may exist if the entire fieldwork is conducted by a single agency working on a specific project or programme in a particular thematic sector. While a wider range of communities may need to be sampled, there should still be economies of scale.

The CoBRA assessment team is typically composed of two lead agencies, namely the **primary lead and co-lead agencies**, and **other supporting agencies**. In principle, it is highly recommended that a legitimate government entity with local level presence in the target area serve as the **primary lead agency**. It provides overall strategic guidance and oversight and ensures the full government ownership of the assessment results as well as buy-in from other stakeholders. Those with the mandates and tasks of multisector coordination and/or disaster risk management are often best placed to take the lead.

An **assessment team leader** with knowledge and experiences in monitoring and evaluation (M&E), impact assessment, community development or a similar field, should be appointed within the primary lead agency (or co-lead agency if the primary lead agency is not able to identify a suitable person). He/she is responsible for managing and coordinating the entire CoBRA process step by step and day to day. In some cases, it may be better to bring in the assessment team leader from outside the assessment area in order to coordinate the entire assessment process in a neutral manner. However, he/she will need to liaise closely with all partners in the planning and implementation periods.

A **co-lead agency** may provide the team with practical technical backstopping and logistical support to ensure timely and high-quality assessment implementation. Organizations with technical expertise and robust operational capacity in the target area would be suitable for this role. This could be a non-governmental, civil society or UN organization.

The number and type of **other supporting agencies** to participate in the team may depend on the size and scope of the assessment. The roles, responsibilities and expectations of all the partners, including both lead and other supporting agencies, should be clarified at the outset. In some cases, especially where the assessment focuses on multiple areas distant from each other, it may be helpful to establish a local working group comprising all partners to manage and monitor the field data collection and analysis process closely. Please see **Phase II Step 3** for further details on this and other positions within the CoBRA Assessment Team.



### OUTPUT: COBRA ASSESSMENT TEAM FORMED WITH CLARIFICATION OF LEAD AND SUPPORTING PARTNERS





## Identify the target populations and livelihood zones to be assessed

As mentioned earlier, before embarking on the fieldwork, the assessment team must agree on the target area for data collection. The CoBRA methodology was designed to examine resilience at community and household levels. A series of field trials held in 2012-2014 in the Horn of Africa region carefully explored the level of subnational administrative units to which the CoBRA results can be aggregated and representative, such as counties in Kenya, regions/districts in Uganda and woredas in Ethiopia. While bringing findings from a wider group of people may help inform and influence higher-level policies and practices, careful consideration must be given not to include too large or heterogeneous populations in a single assessment, which inevitably results in producing overly generic results. Where communities encompass a wide range of livelihood groups and diverse socio-economic conditions, it may be better to undertake more than one CoBRA assessment to enable in-depth and focused analysis for each group/condition (e.g. lower administrative divisions).

Whenever possible, it is highly advisable to clearly delineate the livelihood zones within the CoBRA target area. A livelihood zone is defined here as **the location within which people share relatively homogeneous living conditions with broadly the same pattern of livelihood**, or production system such as pastoral, agro-pastoral, crop farming, fishing and labour-based, etc. Communities within the same livelihood zone tend to be affected by shocks and stresses in similar ways. Data from each livelihood zone could be analysed separately as part of the CoBRA assessment.

Livelihood zones often do not correspond with political/administrative divisions. The CoBRA team should agree before or during the field team training under **Phase II Step 3** on the number and types of livelihood zones to be targeted within a selected assessment area. It is important to note that, in reality, livelihood zones are not always clearly defined, and they can be dynamic and increasingly blurred in the face of urbanization and income diversification. The more livelihood zone categories adopted, the more time and efforts needed to analyse aggregated data.



## OUTPUT: TARGET ASSESSMENT AREA AND POPULATIONS CONFIRMED





## STEP 2: PREPARE FOR FIELDWORK

### What do you need to consider?

- When should a CoBRA assessment be carried out?
- Are there opportunities to pool resources?

### What do you need to do?

- Develop a CoBRA Assessment Plan
- Draw up a realistic budget estimate
- Mobilize internal and external resources to fill gaps

### What is the output of this step?

- A comprehensive CoBRA Assessment Plan developed

### Supporting Documents:

- SD1: Sample Outline of a CoBRA Assessment Plan
- SD2: Indicative List of Resources Required for CoBRA Assessment

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO CONSIDER?



### When should a CoBRA assessment be carried out?

Although CoBRA is broadly applicable to a diverse set of natural and man-made shocks and stresses, the assessment may not be carried out during the height of a crisis period. Many partners within the assessment team will likely have other pressing priorities, such as humanitarian response, and it may be difficult to gain access to the target area or get a good cross-section of community representation for data collection. Ideally, the CoBRA assessment should be undertaken in a non-crisis or 'normal' period, or during the alert or recovery periods, if considered feasible by the assessment team partners and local communities. The assessment team should also take into account the seasonal calendar within the target area and schedule of the populations, such as migration and workload in a year, when identifying the timing of the field data collection. The period that enables the participation of the greatest cross section of community members is clearly the best timing.

### Are there opportunities to pool resources?

As mentioned earlier, CoBRA helps bring out the key drivers of resilience within the target area in a multidimensional and cross-sectoral manner. These findings are of high relevance to a wide range of actors working in the area and will complement and supplement their development and humanitarian efforts significantly in various fields such as policy, planning, programme, M&E and research processes. It will therefore be critical to communicate and share the objectives, purposes and anticipated outputs/benefits of the assessment widely with stakeholders from the beginning, not only for partnership building but also for resource mobilization purposes.

CoBRA assessment can indeed be funded (i.e. financially) and supported (i.e. in-kind) by multiple donors and partners. For example, one partner may allocate their project staff operating in the target area to participate in the field data collection as facilitators, while the other partner may offer office/project vehicles during the data collection period. In this regard, CoBRA should be considered not as an *ad hoc* assessment but rather a strategic capacity-building opportunity. Training existing community-based field staff/extension workers to undertake CoBRA data collection and analysis can be a good long-term investment for organizations.



## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?



### Develop a CoBRA Assessment Plan

#### Develop a CoBRA Assessment Plan

As soon as the core assessment team is formed, the lead and the co-lead agency should facilitate the development of a CoBRA Assessment Plan for the fieldwork in close coordination with all partners. The plan should provide the detailed overview of the assessment and set out the time-frame for the entire assessment process from fieldwork (Phase II) to analysis, documentation and validation, etc. (Phase III). More specifically, the assessment plan should articulate, among other things (see **SD1: Sample Outline of a CoBRA Assessment Plan**):

- Composition of the assessment team with roles and responsibilities of each partner;
- Objectives of the assessment;
- Overview of target area and populations to be assessed;
- Financial plan with details on resources and budget required; and
- Timeline of the assessment process.

The CoBRA Assessment Plan should be utilized as a living document and be regularly updated as necessary during the course of the assessment process. It can also be used as a reference document for fund-raising and filling in resource/support gaps.

### Draw up a realistic budget estimate

A CoBRA assessment cannot be undertaken without proper resources. As with all M&E processes, it should never be viewed as an 'add-on' to be absorbed by other costs. Key resources required may include staff time, external technical support (e.g. training facilitator), logistical costs associated with training, travel, assessment tools/equipment, and participation allowances for field staff (see **SD2: Indicative List of Resources Required for CoBRA Assessment**). The assessment team must establish a realistic cost estimate, clarify cash and in-kind contributions from partners, and identify budget gaps.

### Mobilize internal and external resources to fill in gaps

Gaps in financial resources and in-kind support observed in the CoBRA Assessment Plan should be addressed in a timely manner. The CoBRA assessment team must make a concerted effort to bridge these gaps internally and externally by effectively using various channels and networks.



## OUTPUT: A COMPREHENSIVE COBRA ASSESSMENT PLAN DEVELOPED



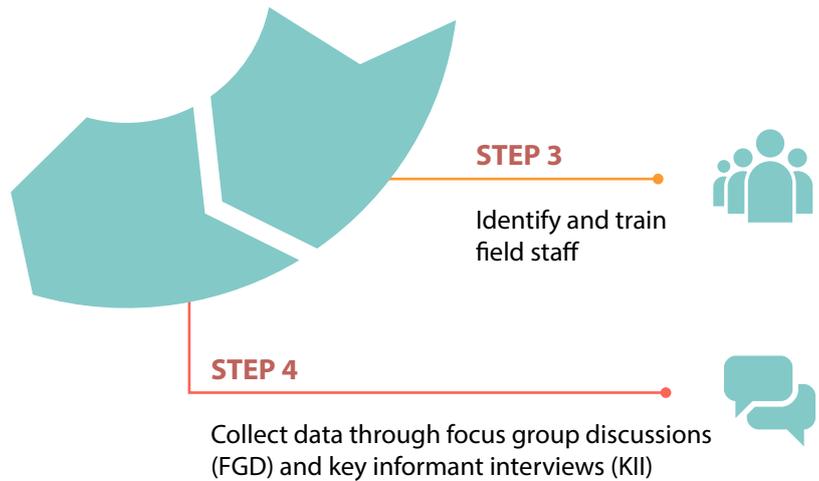




# PHASE II: FIELDWORK AND DATA COLLECTION

Phase II is divided into two steps. Each step aims to:

- Identify the assessment field team and provide members with classroom- and field-based training on data collection by following the step-by-step procedure of the CoBRA Implementation Guidelines; and
- Carry out the data collection within the selected communities.



## STEP 3: IDENTIFY AND TRAIN FIELD STAFF

### What do you need to consider?

- Who should be in a CoBRA assessment field team?

### What do you need to do?

- Prepare for the assessment field team training
- Undertake training
- Finalize CoBRA sampling frame
- Finalize CoBRA assessment logistics plan
- Sensitize CoBRA assessment sample communities
- Develop a post field team training report

### What is the output of this step?

- Assessment field team trained to undertake CoBRA
- A CoBRA sampling frame finalized
- A CoBRA assessment logistics plan finalized
- Sample communities for CoBRA assessment sensitized
- Post field team training report developed and circulated

### Supporting Documents:

- SD3: Members of a CoBRA Assessment Field Team
- SD4: CoBRA Assessment Field Team Training Indicative Schedule
- SD5: CoBRA Assessment Field Team Training Guide
- SD6: CoBRA Sampling Frame Guidance Note
- SD7: Sample Outline of a CoBRA Assessment Logistics Plan
- SD8: Sample Outline of a Post Field Team Training Report





## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO CONSIDER?

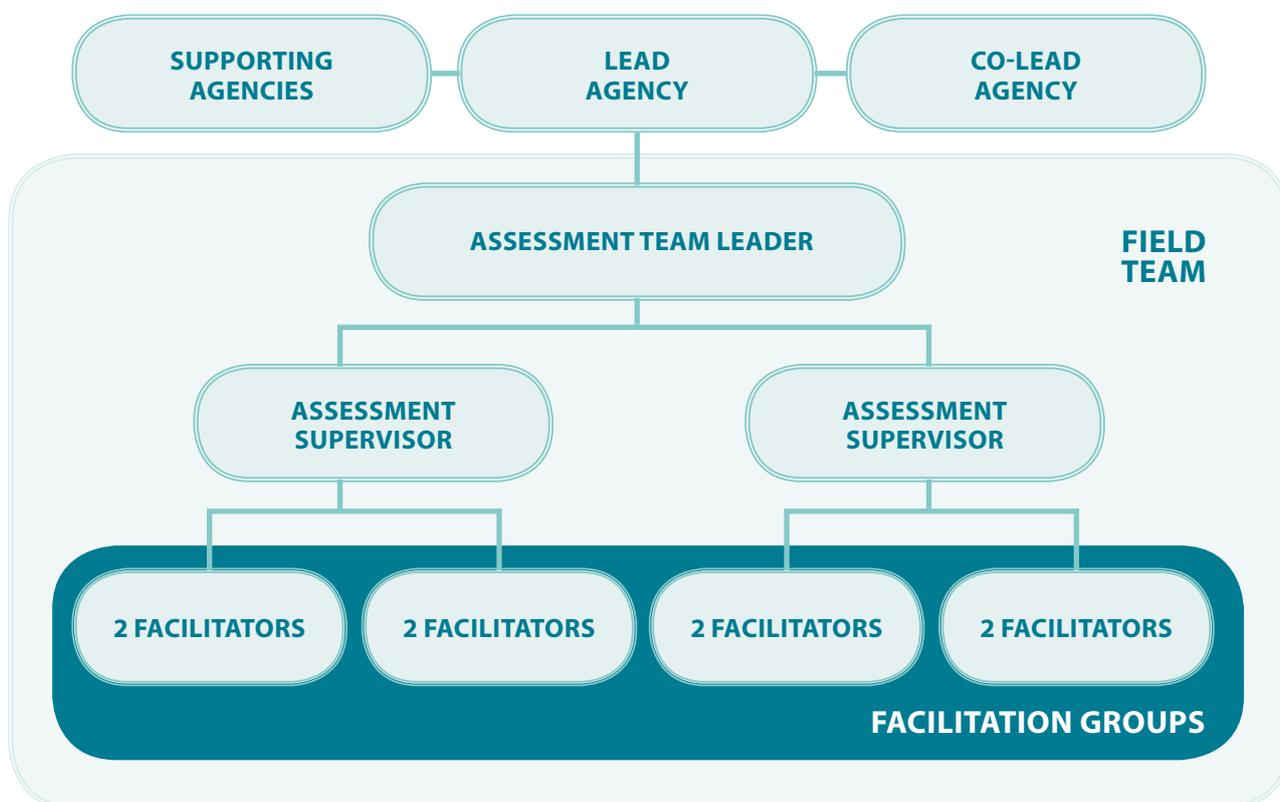


### Who should be in a CoBRA Assessment Field Team?

The field team consists of those who will participate directly in **Phase II Step 3 and/or 4** of a CoBRA assessment such as training and full-scale field data collection on the ground. Generally, the team comprises of an assessment team leader, assessment supervisors and facilitators, as shown in Figure 2. Additional members such as an external technical expert and extra operational support staff may join the team, depending on the team capacity. The number of the assessment supervisors and facilitators to participate from respective CoBRA lead/supporting partners in the field team will be determined based on the scope of the assessment such as the size of the target areas, number of days allocated for field data collection, travel time/distance, resource availability, etc.

Expected roles and responsibilities, as well as qualification requirements, of each of the field team members in Phase II are outlined below and summarized in further detail in **SD3: Members of a CoBRA Assessment Field Team**:

- **Assessment team leader:** Manage, coordinate the training (**Step 3**) and full-scale field data collection (**Step 4**) process under the auspice of the assessment team.
- **Assessment supervisors:** Provide oversight of the fieldwork, mentor and support facilitators and ensure data collected is of consistent quality for data entry and analysis. Each assessment supervisor is expected to manage two to three facilitation groups, with each group containing two facilitators. In some cases, supervisors are selected among the facilitators and exercised on a part-time basis as an additional responsibility.
- **Facilitators:** Collect necessary data by moderating focus group discussions (FGD) and conducting key informant interviews (KIIs) in the target area as the front-line community-based staff. In general, a pair of facilitators work together as a facilitation group to undertake FGDs and KIIs. Typically, 2-3 facilitation groups (e.g. 4-6 facilitators) form a field sub-team to travel together and undertake 2-3 FGD/KIIs in parallel in the same community.



**Figure 2** | Indicative CoBRA Assessment Team Structure



## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?



### Prepare for the assessment field team training

Typically, it takes about four days to complete the full training of the assessment supervisors and facilitators (i.e. trainees). The training comprises two days of interactive sessions in the classroom and one day of trial field data collection, followed by a one-day session to review field trial results and make detailed plans for fieldwork. Please see Table 1 and [SD4: CoBRA Assessment Field Team Training Indicative Schedule](#).

The CoBRA assessment team thus needs to first agree on when and where to organize the training. It should ideally be held somewhere away from the office location in order to ensure the full participation of the field team. As part of the preparatory work, timing and location of the trial field data collection on Day 3 of the training will need to be planned in advance so that the pilot communities can be appropriately sensitized and mobilized. As per these decisions, the assessment (co-)lead agencies should make necessary logistical arrangements for the venue, travel/transport, accommodation, remuneration, etc., and prepare the full assessment tools (See [SD2: Indicative List of Resources Required for CoBRA Assessment](#)) and other training materials/equipment (See [SD5: CoBRA Assessment Field Team Training Guide](#)) in a timely manner. The (co-)lead agency may consider dispatching one or a few operational support staff to join the field team and provide necessary administrative and logistical support closely during the training and full-scale field data collection period.

#### Day 1 – Classroom (full day)

- Introduction - CoBRA Conceptual Framework
- Mapping shocks and stresses in the target area
- Mapping interventions and changes in the target area
- Translating resilience into locally understandable terms
- Community representation
- Listening, hearing and recording

#### Day 2 – Classroom (full day)

- Introduction to CoBRA assessment tools
- Step-by-step simulation exercise on FGD
- Step-by-step simulation exercise on KIIs

#### Day 3 – Trial Field Data Collection (full day)

- Trial FGD with community representatives
- Trial KIIs with nominated resilient households

#### Day 4 – Classroom (full day)

- Reviewing and debriefing of trial field data collection
- Planning for full field data collection

**Table 1** | Overview of CoBRA Field Team Training Sessions

### Undertake training

The training should be led by the assessment team leader and/or supported by an external technical expert with previous CoBRA assessment experiences (i.e. trainer).

[SD5](#) provides detailed guidance on CoBRA assessment field team training, including the roles of trainer and trainees in different sessions. In general, the field team training has two main objectives:

- 1) Participants gain a full understanding of the CoBRA methodology and can explain and discuss the key issues to be addressed by the assessment to/with local communities; and
- 2) Participants have a full understanding of how to use the CoBRA assessment tools for FGD and KIIs and are able to elicit and record quality data for analysis.

By adopting a highly interactive stepwise approach, the training will also serve as an opportunity for trainees to take ownership of the entire data collection process, for example, through the participation in the sample frame development and target community sensitization/mobilization processes.

Please note that the training programme and structures could be adjusted flexibly in accordance with different needs. For example, if the geographical focus of the CoBRA is narrow and details on the sample frame such as the number/location of the communities to be visited and number of FGD/KIIs to be undertaken are agreed prior to the training, some of the classroom sessions related to these fields may be removed from the training agenda. Please see [SD6: CoBRA Sampling Frame Guidance Note](#) for more information on how to develop the sampling frame for the CoBRA fieldwork. Ideally, the main CoBRA fieldwork should begin immediately after the training. If the quality of data collected in the training on Day 3 is acceptable, it can be used for data analysis as part of the assessment.



## OUTPUT: ASSESSMENT FIELD TEAM TRAINED TO UNDERTAKE COBRA



### Finalize CoBRA Sampling Frame

As mentioned above, CoBRA data is collected through FGD with target community representatives and KIIs with nominated 'resilient' households, and each of the community discussion/household interview sessions is led by a facilitation group, i.e. pair of facilitators. Please see [Phase II Step 4B](#) for more information on the nomination process. By following the steps outlined in [SD6](#), the assessment field team should develop a CoBRA sampling frame, clarifying how many FGD/KIIs will be undertaken and where. The assessment sites should be a representative sample of the target area in terms of livelihood groups, shocks/stresses exposure and distribution of humanitarian and development services/interventions, among other criteria. Mapping of interventions/services in the area, such as primary/secondary schools, hospitals/health centres/clinics, tarmac road, banks, mobile phone coverage, etc., may be addressed during the training Session C6 (See [SD5](#) for further details).



**OUTPUT: A COBRA SAMPLING FRAME FINALIZED**

### Finalize CoBRA Assessment Logistics Plan

Sending field sub-teams out to different locations in different vehicles can be a major logistical effort, particularly if the sample communities are in remote areas with no major accommodation facilities or market to obtain necessary supplies along the routes. Thus, once the sampling frame is finalized, the assessment field team should confirm the number of field sub-teams, their compositions (i.e. number of facilitation groups and facilitators) as well as the assessment sample communities to be visited by each sub-team. Decisions on who to serve as full-time/part-time supervisors, which facilitators to be paired up as a facilitation group, which facilitation groups to be put together as a field sub-team should be made based on various criteria such as the trainees' respective technical capacity, language skills, local knowledge, gender balance, etc. [Phase II Step 4](#) provides additional insights on how the field sub-teams should be organized.

These details should be incorporated into the CoBRA assessment logistics plan with reference to [SD7: Sample Outline of a CoBRA Assessment Logistics Plan](#). The logistics plan includes a field data collection itinerary, clearly outlining which sub-team goes where, on which day, in which vehicle, etc. Please see [Phase II Step 4](#) for more information on field sub-teams.

Based on the plan, the CoBRA assessment field team should undertake logistical preparations such as accommodation reservations and purchase of required supplies as much as possible before proceeding to the field trip, so that the sub-teams can focus on data collection on the ground. The assessment field team training allocates time for these actions (e.g. Session C11, C17 and C19 as shown in [SD4](#) and [SD5](#)). If the team encounters insurmountable logistical difficulties, the original CoBRA sampling frame may need revision.



**OUTPUT: A COBRA ASSESSMENT LOGISTICS PLAN FINALIZED**

### Sensitize CoBRA assessment sample communities

In principle, all the sample communities targeted for CoBRA should be contacted and sensitized about the assessment, and potential FGD participants identified before the field sub-teams embark on their journeys. Channels of communication may include, among others, face-to-face meeting or mobile phone conversation with community representatives, and sensitization through local government officers (e.g. area chiefs, extension officers). Assessment field team members are encouraged to use their own knowledge of, and networks in, the local communities to decide whom to contact/inform, and how best to identify appropriate participants. This issue is dealt with on Day 1 of the field team training in Session C8 and C9. Time for prior community sensitization and mobilization works is allocated in Day 1, 2 and 4 of the training in Session C11, C17 and C19.



**OUTPUT: SAMPLE COMMUNITIES FOR COBRA ASSESSMENT SENSITIZED**



### Develop a Post field Team Training Report

Once the CoBRA assessment field team training is complete, the CoBRA assessment team leader should prepare the post field team training report (see [SD8: Sample Outline of a Post Field Team Training Report](#)). The report summarizes the overview of the training, outlines the best practices and lessons learnt in different sessions and provides the updated CoBRA assessment timeframe. It should also contain the key outputs of the training such as the final CoBRA sampling frame and assessment logistics plan, etc. The report should then be circulated to all the CoBRA assessment team members, including (co-)lead agencies and other supporting agencies, which did not participate in the training for information sharing. Based on the report, (co-) lead agencies and/or others may provide specific guidance, such as how to address technical and operational challenges faced by the assessment field team. In addition, the report is a useful tool to help improve the future CoBRA assessment process in an evidence-based manner.



**OUTPUT: POST FIELD TEAM TRAINING REPORT DEVELOPED AND CIRCULATED**



## STEP 4: COLLECT DATA THROUGH FGD AND KII

### What do you need to consider?

- How should the field sub-teams be organized?
- How can the quality of recorded data be assured?

### What do you need to do?

- Undertake data collection
  - 4a) FGD
  - 4b) KIIs

### WHAT DO YOU NEED TO CONSIDER?



#### How should the field sub-teams be organized?

Full scale field data collection should start as soon as the team leader is confident that the assessment field team comprising the assessment supervisors and the facilitators are competent following the training. The number of FGD and KIIs to be undertaken will be set out in the sampling frame. Depending on the geographic coverage of the assessment target area, the field team may be divided into sub-teams.

Due to the distance between the communities, some sub-teams may work completely independently without meeting with each other and/or with the team leader during the data collection period. If the target area is narrower, field sub-teams may be able to regroup each day and share experiences and challenges. When the team leader cannot easily meet with the field sub-teams daily, the assessment supervisors are expected to oversee the performances of their facilitation groups closely, and provide regular technical advice on the facilitation techniques and data recording.

#### How can the quality of recorded data be ensured?

During the field data collection, each facilitation group will fill in the answers/comments/inputs gathered from FGD and KIIs manually in the hard copies of [SD9: FGD Recording Sheet](#) and [SD12: KII Recording Sheet](#). All the data in SD9 and SD12 then need to be transferred to Excel: [SD 13: FGD Data Entry Sheet](#) and [SD14: KII Data Entry Sheet](#) respectively. In order to minimize data inconsistency as well as to streamline data analysis process, both [SD9](#)



and **SD12** adopt multiple choice options in many sections, based on past CoBRA assessment results. While types of choices may be adjusted flexibly based on local contexts, all facilitators are expected to familiarize themselves with the choices in each section during field team training.

In order to maximize data quality, the assessment team leader and supervisors should review the FGD and KII recording sheets on-site immediately after each FGD and KII session, or at least at the end of each day of field data collection, to ensure that the data has been clearly and coherently recorded on the sheets. Such a debriefing session will be useful for facilitators to provide feedback, and sub-teams to jointly discuss concerns and agree on how to address potential similar challenges in the subsequent FGD and KIIs. Facilitators are also encouraged to enter FGD and KII data into **SD13** and **SD14** Excel spreadsheets daily, if they have access to computers, together with the team leader or supervisors following their daily reviews of reporting sheets.





## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?



### Undertake data collection

Table 2 summarises the two types of data collection approaches adopted by CoBRA. The following sections outline what you need to consider and do for each approach.

Data collection approaches	Description
<b>4a: FGD</b>	Semi-structured discussion with community representatives. Separate discussions may be held with different groups of the community (e.g. men, women, youth) to solicit gender/age-specific input. The focus groups' demographics and size must be agreed upon/standardized during Session C8 of <b>Phase II Step 3</b> field team training. The groups must represent households from the target (and control) communities. Number of FGD per sample community/livelihood zone including CoBRA target area must be articulated in the sampling frame.
<b>4b: KIIs</b>	Semi-structured interviews with adult members of households identified and nominated as resilient (approximately two informants per community).

**Table 2** | CoBRA Data Collection Processes



## STEP 4A: FGD WITH COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

### What do you need to consider?

- How should community expectations be managed?
- How can the answers accurately represent community views and perspectives?
- How can the technical issue of 'resilience' be best discussed?
- How is FGD carried out with participants at different literacy levels?

### What do you need to do?

- Undertake FGD
- Review completed FGD recording sheets with the assessment supervisor

### What is the output of this step?

- FGD completed in all sample communities and FGD recording sheets adequately filled

### Supporting Documents:

- SD9: FGD Recording Sheet
- SD10: Graphics for FGD Section 3 Scoring
- SD11: Indicative List of Resilience Statements



## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO CONSIDER?



### How should community expectations be managed?

It is very important for the facilitators to explain the objectives and purposes of the FGD to the community participants at the beginning of the discussion. In order to avoid the participants' cognitive bias, it is imperative that participants understand that the FGD is an information-gathering exercise to enable better understanding of their communities' aspirations and challenges. It is not linked in any way to current or future programming, funding or other support, although organizations and policymakers may use findings when planning in the future. This exercise is critical particularly when the assessment supervisors/facilitators are known to the community or they belong to the organization(s) working directly in that community, delivering certain humanitarian/development interventions. The introductory section (i.e. Section O of **SD9**) plays a role in creating a trusting environment between the facilitators and the participants for honest dialogue that is not influenced by false expectations of personal benefit to participants.

### How can the team ensure that answers represent community views and perspectives?

FGD aims to solicit, as much as possible, views and perspectives commonly shared within the entire sample community. Therefore, as part of the introductory conversations, facilitators should ask FGD participants to provide answers and input as community representatives, taking into account those who are not part of the discussion in their groups of the community (e.g. men, women, youth). Soliciting shared views and perspectives is central to CoBRA and thus it may need to be reiterated consistently during the discussion if the answers become too personal (e.g. talk about the death of a family member during the discussion of a shock or crisis affecting the entire community).

### How can the technical issue of 'resilience' be best discussed?

Resilience is not a well-known concept in most communities and many local languages do not have a direct translation. The field team thus jointly identify the common and locally relevant description of a resilient community in both official and local languages in the assessment country during Session C7 of the training. Facilitators must memorize or note down this description and share it with the FGD participants (Section 3 of **SD8**). If the participants still have difficulty understanding the concept after the explanation, facilitators may present other key elements of the term that are applicable in the local context, using plain and practical words. Constraints and lessons learnt from describing the concept may be shared among the field sub-team(s) in the daily debriefing sessions, to improve the process in the following days.

### How is FGD carried out with participants at different literacy levels?

Literacy levels may be low in some communities targeted for a CoBRA assessment. FGD is administered orally to ensure that illiteracy does not exclude any participants. In addition, FGD uses visual aids such as **SD10: Graphics for FGD Section 3 Scoring** and beans as part of discussion (Section 3 of **SD8**).

It is important to note, however, that the standardized graphic images, which were developed based on past CoBRA experiences in different countries, may look familiar in some communities while being poorly understood in other communities. The assessment team may review the relevance of **SD9** graphic images and make necessary updates and adjustments before printing them out. Furthermore, facilitators should explain each graphic image verbally in plain terms during the discussion to avoid confusion.

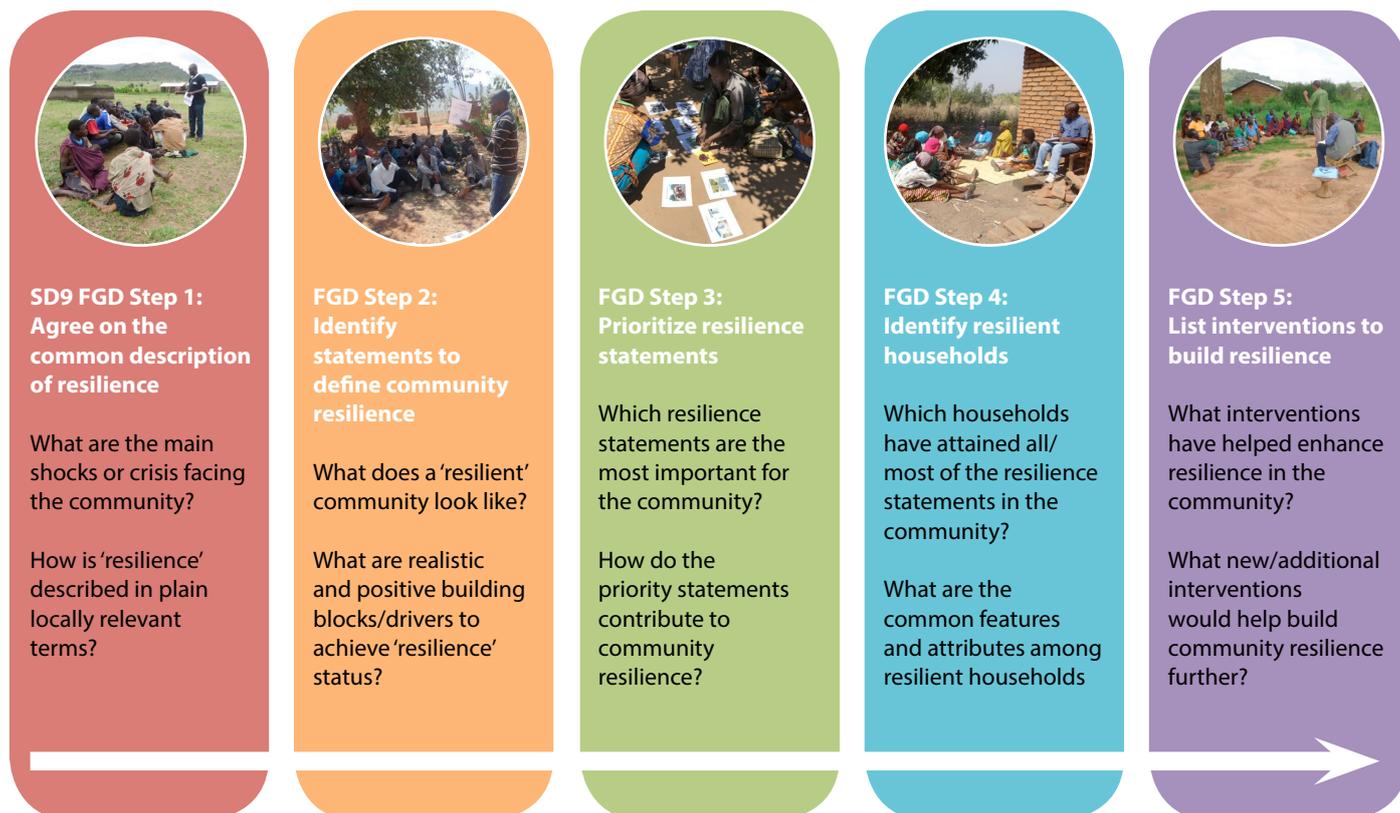


## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?



### Undertake FGD

SD9 provides detailed instructions on which questions to ask, and why, in each section. Figure 3 provides an overview of the CoBRA field assessment steps and the key questions addressed through the FGDs and KIs.



**Figure 3** | CoBRA Field Assessment Steps and Questions Addressed

A summary explanation of the key issues explored in the FGD is outlined below:

#### FGD Step 1: Agree on the common description of resilience (FGD Section 1-3)

The initial section sets the basis for the rest of the FGD. Firstly, in Section 1, the facilitators obtain basic information on the 'community', to which the FGD participants will be referring throughout the discussion (i.e. "resilience for whom"). Secondly, in Section 2, the group is asked to list the main shocks or crisis/es facing their community. This is important for the FGD participants to establish a common ground on "resilience to what." Finally, in Section 3, the facilitators explain and develop a shared understanding of resilience, using plain and locally relevant terms. Facilitators generally draw on the descriptions developed in the preceding assessment field team training (i.e. Section C7) in the local language. They tend to explain resilience as the people who cope with the shocks/crises identified in FGD Section 2. Coping may be explained in simple terms such as households that are able to eat well, continue their livelihoods and/or send their kids to school even through the shock/crisis period. It is important that the facilitators do not over-explain the term and thereby bias the group's views. The aim is merely to ensure that participants achieve a consensus.



## FGD Step 2: Identify statements to define community resilience (FGD Section 3.1)

FGD participants are encouraged to provide outcome statements that describe how their community would be if ALL households had achieved resilience status. Participants can think freely, and there should be no limits to the initial list of statements. Facilitators should work to avoid duplicative statements and ensure statements are as specific as possible but not too detailed (see Box 1). If the statements are too broad or detailed, the facilitators should ask the speakers to explain further and clarify.

In previous CoBRA exercises, FGD participants tend to come up with 10-30 sets of statements. As participants make each statement, the facilitators should pick a laminated graphic card corresponding to the statement among SD10 and place it on the ground (or table) in front of the group. If a relevant graphic card matching up with the statement is not available among SD10, the facilitators are encouraged to draw a simple corresponding diagram or image and place it. This process will allow the participants to keep track of the statements already mentioned and avoid repetitive discussion and duplicative statements. The facilitators must not show unused graphic cards to the participants beforehand, in order to ensure lack of bias.



Resilience statements need to be specific but not too detailed. Also, the statements should not be broken down into too many sub-statements as this may affect the following FGD Step 3: Prioritize resilience statements.

For example, “Our children would be educated” is a typical statement where participants need prompting to clarify which level of education is desired: primary, secondary, tertiary, or other level.

Similar statements may sometimes be mentioned by different FGD participants, e.g. “We would have large herds;” “We would have more healthy cows and goats;” and “We can sell our cattle at a good price.” The first statement may focus on livestock quantity, while the second combines the issues of quantity and animal health, and the third deals with the livestock market. Statements may not address livestock species separately but be divided into key value chain processes. Facilitators are required to combine/ separate/specify sentiments as appropriate with reference to SD11: Indicative List of Resilience Statements.

### Box 1 | Phrasing Resilience Outcome Statements

## FGD Step 3: Prioritize resilience statements (FGD Section 3.2)

Once the long list of ‘resilience statements’ is exhausted, the FGD participants are asked to identify the most important statements for their community and rank them. In order to collect the answers effectively, the facilitators provide each participant with six beans and ask him/her to place the beans on the laminated graphic cards/hand-written image cards as follows: 1) put three beans on top of the most important card; 2) put two beans on the second most important card; and 3) put one bean on the third most important card.

After all the FGD participants have placed their beans, the total scores are counted for all the statements. The facilitators then present the two highest scoring statements and ask the participants to explain, with specific examples if possible, why they see these statements as the most important for their community resilience.



#### FGD Step 4: Identify resilient households (FGD Section 4)

In this section, the participants are asked to:

- Think of the households in their community who have attained most/many (if not all), or the highest number, of the prioritized and other resilience outcome statements both in normal and shock/crisis periods;
- Describe the key common features of such households and what they have done to become or stay resilient; and
- Assess whether the number/proportion of these 'resilient' households has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past 5-10 years.

#### FGD Step 5: List interventions to build resilience (FGD Section 5)

Firstly, the participants are asked to list all types of interventions, services and actions that took place and benefited their community, in terms of enhancing resilience, in recent years. These may include both interventions provided by the public sector and development/humanitarian partners, services delivered by the private sector, and/or spontaneous internal actions by the community members. The list should emerge solely from participants. Facilitators should not prompt or list any specific interventions or projects.

Secondly, the participants are requested to discuss and jointly identify the top three most effective types of past/ongoing interventions/services/actions in building resilience, which supported the community in attaining the priority resilience statements, maintaining resilience attainment levels and/or preventing them from dropping during the shock/crisis period. For each highly-rated intervention, participants should explain how the support contributed to the enhanced level of resilience statement directly or indirectly, and why it was so effective.

Thirdly, the participants are requested to discuss and jointly identify the top three priority interventions/services/actions that should be implemented in the future to improve resilience, again explaining why and how they will help the maintenance and enhancement of resilience achievements.

#### Wrap-up and feedback (Section 6)

At the end of the FGD, the facilitators should extend their appreciation to the participants for their time and active contributions to the discussion. Any views they may have on the process and topics of discussion should be noted as future reference. The process(es) for feeding back the results and findings to communities and other stakeholders should be outlined.

#### Review completed FGD recording sheets with the assessment supervisor

After the completion of a FGD session, the FGD recording sheet should be reviewed by the assessment team leader and/or supervisors for quality assurance. The daily joint debriefing for the field (sub-)teams at the end of data collection will also further continuous improvement in various aspects of FGD and KII in terms of facilitation, data recording, time management, task sharing, etc.



**OUTPUT: FGD COMPLETED IN ALL SAMPLE COMMUNITIES AND FGD RECORDING SHEETS ADEQUATELY FILLED**



## STEP 4B: KIIS WITH RESILIENT HOUSEHOLDS

### What do you need to consider?

- How should resilient households be selected?
- How can one ensure that a selected household is really resilient?

### What do you need to do?

- Identify an appropriate member of a 'resilient' household as the interviewee
- Undertake KIIs
- Review completed KII recording sheets with the assessment supervisor

### What is the output of this step (Step 4a and 4b)?

- KIIs completed in all sample communities and KII recording sheets adequately filled

### Supporting Documents:

- SD12: KII Recording Sheet

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO CONSIDER?



### How should resilient households be selected?

Resilient households are the households in a community who have attained most/many (if not all), or the highest number, of the prioritized and other resilience outcome statements, which were identified and prioritized during the **FGD Step 2 and 3**, both in normal and shock/crisis periods. Previous CoBRA exercises have proven that in almost all (if not all) communities, some households are considered absolutely or relatively more resilient than others.

Whenever possible, FGD participants should identify and nominate resilient households in the assessment sample communities. They may also be identified through community leaders or the field (sub-)team's own networks. In some locations, individuals identified by the focus groups as members of resilient households may refuse to accept this designation. They may be concerned that accepting it might lead to high expectations for peer support from other community members, or their exclusion from future development/humanitarian support.

The facilitation group must take this sensitivity into consideration and strive to identify resilient households in a discreet manner, while explaining the purpose of the exercise fully to the individuals and FGD participants (See Section 0 of **SD9**).

### How can one ensure that a selected household is really resilient?

It cannot be ensured. The household is selected on the basis of the community's understanding of resilience, which may not correspond to numerous other definitions/standards/principles of resilience, but that should not matter. The aim of CoBRA KII is to understand whom the communities consider resilient, and why. In many communities, even the most resilient households have not attained the resilience outcome statements considered most important in the FGD: e.g. access to tarmac roads. This is because some of the priority resilience outcome statements may be absent for the entire location of the assessment. Therefore, these households can be considered only relatively 'more' resilient than others due to their individual/household characteristics.



## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?



### Identify an appropriate member of a 'resilient' household as the interviewee

Subject to the concerns outlined above, an adult member within a nominated resilient household should participate in the interview immediately after the FGD. Ideally, two separate KIIs should be carried out by two facilitators in parallel with representatives of two resilient households.

### Undertake KIIs

The information from KII is highly qualitative and thus facilitators are expected to use their skills and sensitivity to elicit comprehensive and honest responses from interviewees. Following the detailed instructions in SD12, the facilitators conduct a semi-structured interview that solicits the following information and insights on resilient households:

- Household composition, education level and sources of income/livelihoods (KII Section 1-2);
- Factors that have contributed to the household's resilience and pathways to resilience, i.e. steps taken by the household to become resilient (KII Section 3); and
- Priority interventions/services/changes/actions that they consider helped other households in the community to cope better with a shock/crisis (KII Section 4).

### Review completed KII recording sheets with the assessment supervisor

All completed KII recording sheets should be reviewed by the assessment team leader or supervisors for quality assurance. Exchange of experiences and lessons learnt among the field (sub-)teams will also lead to continuous improvement in the quality of the information and answers which facilitators extract and document.



**OUTPUT: KIIS COMPLETED IN ALL SAMPLE COMMUNITIES AND FGD RECORDING SHEETS ADEQUATELY FILLED**





Phase III consists of two steps:

- Analyse data collected in Phase II Step 4 through FGD and KIIs comprehensively; and
- Translate the results and findings into a document format and present the draft report to the assessment field team and other CoBRA assessment team members for joint review and validation.



## STEP 5: ANALYSE DATA

### What do you need to consider?

- Who should undertake the data analysis?
- How should CoBRA findings be interpreted?

### What do you need to do?

- Complete data entry
- Analyse data

### What is the output of this step?

- FGD/KII data spreadsheets and master worksheets developed and fully analysed

### Supporting Documents:

- SD13: FGD Data Entry Sheet
- SD14: KII Data Entry Sheet

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO CONSIDER?



### Who should undertake data analysis?

To ensure quality, it is highly recommended that the primary responsibility for data analysis rests with a senior technical member within the CoBRA assessment team, such as the assessment team leader, with support from other team members with data analysis skills and/or an external technical expert. The size of the data analysis team depends heavily on the scope of the CoBRA assessment, such as the number of FGD/KIIs conducted and the level of data disaggregation needed.



## How should CoBRA findings be interpreted?

Analysis of CoBRA assessment data often throws up strange or contradictory results, which are not immediately clear. In attempting to understand findings, it is useful for the data analysis team to refer to secondary data collected from various sources based on the literature review continually undertaken on the assessment target area since the CoBRA Phase I Step 1. Some of the relevant background data and information to be possibly reviewed as support or evidence for the analysis may include data from household budget or living standard surveys, capacity and vulnerability assessments, local area development plans, Household Economy Surveys, etc.

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?



### Complete data entry

All data collected from FGD and KIIs must be entered into **SD13** and **SD14**, the formatted standard Excel spreadsheets, for compilation on which to base aggregated and disaggregated data analysis. One SD13/SD14 spreadsheet should be used for each of the completed FGD/KII recording sheet (i.e. **SD9** and **SD12**). Data entry may be carried out during the field data collection period (**Phase II Step 4**) by the facilitation groups and their supervisors at the time of the daily FGD/KII recording sheet review, or after the assessment in a collective manner by the available CoBRA assessment team member(s), depending on the availability of computers. In either case, there must be a mechanism to review data, detect errors and double-check accuracy during input, prior to proceeding to the analysis.

### Analyse data

Once all the FGD and KIIs data is entered into Excel **SD13** and **SD14** spreadsheets, the analyst should merge the spreadsheets into a single master Excel worksheet. Depending on the size of the assessment/amount of data, the master worksheet may be imported into other statistical programs, such as the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), for ease of analysis and interpretation.

While CoBRA is a qualitative assessment tool, some of the FGD and KII responses can be sorted and turned into numerical results based on:

- Scores (i.e. FGD Section 3.2: Bean scores of resilience statement); and
- Frequency of mention (e.g. FGD Section 4.1: Characteristics of resilient households; FGD Section 5.2-5.3: Past/ongoing and additional/new resilience building interventions; KII Section 2.1: Source of income/livelihoods activities; KII Section 3.1: Characteristics of resilient households; KII Section 3.3a: Duration of household's resilience; KII Section 4.1: Priority resilience building interventions).

FGD and KII data may not only be compiled into aggregate data and reported for the whole assessment target areas, but can also be broken down into smaller units of data. Indeed, it is important to disaggregate data in different categories for in-depth and comprehensive analysis, through which to reveal any underlying trends, patterns, and/or insights that would not be observable in aggregated data sets. *Inter alia*, whenever feasible, the sorted results should be subdivided by filtering them by administrative units, types of FGD groups (e.g. gender, age), livelihood groups (e.g. pastoral, agro-pastoral, farming livelihoods), etc. Disaggregated analysis allows assessment of the similarities and differences in views and perspectives in various geographical, agro-ecological and demographical contexts. Furthermore, some of the FGD and KII answers may be directly cross-referenced, such as priority resilience building interventions (FGD Section 5.2-5.3 and KII Section 4.1) to examine how visions vary between the nominated resilient households and the rest of the community members.

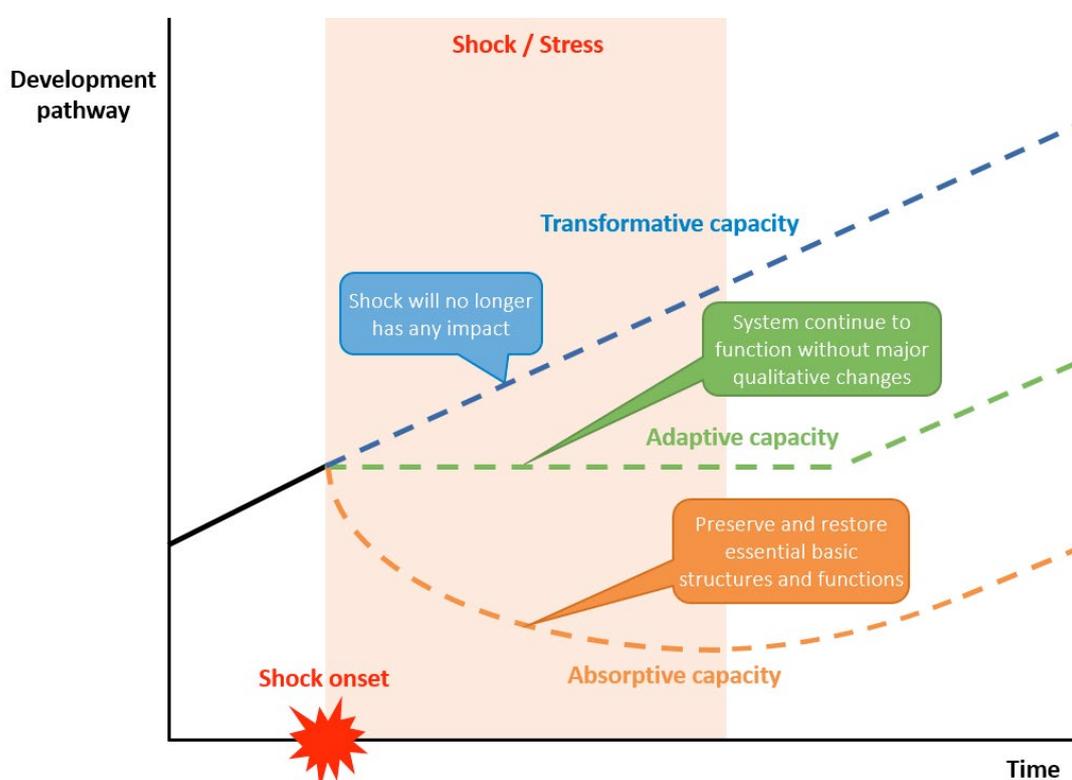
Numerically sorted and disaggregated results must be analysed further alongside/cross-referenced with more qualitative data, i.e. narrative feedback and explanations provided by the FGD and KII participants. These include the responses in FGD Section 3.3b, 4.2b, 5.2b, 5.3b and 6, and KII 3.2, 3.3b and 4.1b. Stories told by the focus group participants and key informants help provide a more complete picture of each answer and capture adequately the subtleties (e.g. why and/or how) behind the numerical findings (e.g. who, what, where, when, etc.).



Since CoBRA tends to bring out a broad and diverse set of community/household voices and perspectives, it may be of use to analyse and interpret the results using different parameters and criteria. For example, the resilience outcome statements and their scores (FGD Section 3.1 and 3.2) may be organized into sectoral categories, following the national/local government structures in the assessment area such as education, energy, transport, agriculture, livestock, environment, etc. By the same token, pathways to resilience explained by the resilient households (KI Section 3.2) may be summarized to demonstrate how different steps contribute to boost different types of resilience capacities, namely abrogative, adaptive and transformative capacities. See Box 2 and Phase III Step 6 for further details.

According to the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2014)**, resilience can be boosted by strengthening three different types of capacities:<sup>1</sup>

- **Absorptive capacity:** The ability of a system to prepare for, mitigate or prevent negative impacts, using predetermined coping responses in order to preserve and restore essential basic structures and functions. This includes coping mechanisms used during periods of shock. Examples of absorptive capacity include early harvest, taking children out of school, and delaying debt repayments.
- **Adaptive capacity:** The ability of a system to adjust, modify or change its characteristics and actions to moderate potential future damage and to take advantage of opportunities, so that it can continue to operate without major qualitative changes in function or structural identity. Examples of adaptive capacity include diversification of livelihoods, involvement of the private sector in delivering basic services, and introducing drought-resistant seeds.
- **Transformative capacity:** The ability to create a fundamentally new system so that the shock will no longer have any impact. This can be necessary when ecological, economic or social structures make the existing system untenable. Examples of transformative capacity include the introduction of conflict resolution mechanisms, urban planning measures, and actions to stamp out corruption.



**Box 2** | Resilience capacities

<sup>1</sup> OECD (2014). Guidelines for Resilience Systems Analysis: How to Analyse Risk and Build a Roadmap to Resilience. OECD Publishing: Paris.



## STEP 6: DOCUMENT AND VALIDATE THE FINDINGS

### What do you need to consider?

- How should the CoBRA data analysis results be consolidated into a report?
- Who should participate in the validation of the draft CoBRA report?

### What do you need to do?

- Draft a CoBRA Assessment Report
- Review and validate the draft CoBRA Assessment Report
- Finalize the CoBRA Assessment Report

### What is the output of this step?

- CoBRA results and findings validated and comments/inputs/recommendations provided
- CoBRA Assessment Report finalized

### Supporting Documents:

- SD15: Sample Outline of a CoBRA Assessment Report

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO CONSIDER?



### How should the CoBRA analysis results be consolidated into a report?

Through comparative and integrated analyses of FGD and KII data, CoBRA generates a wide range of results and findings on community and household resilience in the assessment target area. Since these results and findings are expected to be relevant to a broad cross-section of stakeholders, the assessment report should be developed in a user-friendly and easily comprehensible way. In order to draw the target audience's attention to specific data patterns, trends and observations, it is highly recommended to present information not solely through text but also visually by creating figures and tables, and inserting photos taken in the field, etc. As aforementioned, some of the FGD and KII responses can be turned into numerical results, and these can easily be presented in column, bar, pie and other chart formats. **SD15: Sample Outline of a CoBRA Assessment Report** provides several examples of how to visually represent CoBRA data and information using simple Microsoft Office chart tools.

Some of the prominent results generated from FGD and KII data analysis may be used as evidence, to inform future resilience policymaking, strategic planning, programming, research and other work in the assessment target area and beyond. Conscious efforts must thus be made to translate the assessment findings into concise policy-/practice-relevant messages in the assessment report. Draft recommendations should be cross-referenced with existing literature and discussed/endorsed by the CoBRA assessment team and other relevant stakeholders.

### Who should participate in the validation of the draft CoBRA report?

It is critical to jointly review and validate the draft CoBRA Assessment Report with the communities from which the data has been gathered before finalizing and disseminating it. The joint review/validation's scope will depend on various factors such as time and resource availability. Priority should be placed on consultations with the assessment field team members and the representatives from the assessment sample communities as the primary sources of local knowledge for fact-checking, data clarification and additional insights to explain specific findings. The report should also be shared with the other CoBRA assessment team partners to solicit technical guidance on overall presentation and specific analysis results. Other relevant stakeholders who are knowledgeable on resilience or community-based qualitative study and can provide good insight into findings, may also engage in the review and validation process.



**OUTPUT: FGD/KII DATA SPREADSHEETS AND MASTER WORKSHEETS DEVELOPED AND FULLY ANALYSED**



## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?



### Draft a CoBRA Assessment Report

It is very important for the facilitators to explain the objectives and purposes of the FGD to the community participants at the beginning of the discussion. In order to avoid the participants' cognitive bias, it is imperative that participants understand that the FGD is an information-gathering exercise to enable better understanding of their communities' aspirations and challenges. It is not linked in any way to current or future programming, funding or other support, although organizations and policymakers may use findings when planning in the future. This exercise is critical particularly when the assessment supervisors/facilitators are known to the community or they belong to the organization(s) working directly in that community, delivering certain humanitarian/development interventions. The introductory section (i.e. Section O of **SD9**) plays a role in creating a trusting environment between the facilitators and the participants for honest dialogue that is not influenced by false expectations of personal benefit to participants.

### Review and validate the draft CoBRA Assessment Report

Once the preliminary CoBRA analysis results are documented, they should be presented to, discussed with and validated by a set of peer reviewers. This task may involve convening a meeting, or series of meetings, and/or online consultations. Ideally, the peer reviewers should encompass the CoBRA assessment team, particularly the field team members, as well as the selected representatives from the assessment sample communities. It may be necessary to hold a dedicated meeting specifically for community representatives so as to present the FGD and KII outputs differently depending on their language requirements and/or literacy levels. When organizing a meeting, it is useful to split the reviewers into groups to solicit a variety of feedback, opinions and suggestions.



**OUTPUT: COBRA RESULTS AND FINDINGS VALIDATED AND COMMENTS/INPUTS/RECOMMENDATIONS PROVIDED**

### Finalize the CoBRA Assessment Report

The data analysis team should integrate all the feedback provided by the peer reviewers into relevant sections of the CoBRA Assessment Report, make necessary revisions and adjustments in text and visual aids as per the reviewers' advice, and finalize the document. If the assessment target broad geographical area and/or the final assessment report becomes unmanageably large, it may be useful to develop a brief summary report with the key findings and recommendations for specific administrative locations or target population groups. The summary reports not only help convey site-specific information and messages to targeted audience but also enable quick comparisons between locations or among groups for higher-level decision/policymakers.

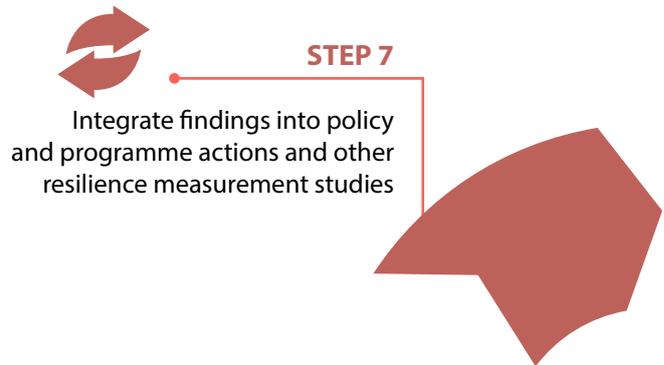


**OUTPUT: COBRA ASSESSMENT REPORT FINALIZED**



# PHASE IV: IMPLEMENTATION OF COBRA FINDINGS

The aim of Phase IV Step 7 is to incorporate the CoBRA results, findings and recommendations into policy, planning, programming, monitoring, research and other relevant efforts on resilience building in the assessment target area and at broader levels. This step also addresses the issues related to the repeating of the CoBRA assessment.



## STEP 7: INTEGRATE FINDINGS INTO POLICY AND PROGRAMME ACTIONS AND OTHER RESILIENCE MEASUREMENT STUDIES

### What do you need to consider?

- How often should CoBRA assessments be undertaken?

### What do you need to do?

- Disseminate the CoBRA assessment results and findings
- Support the application of CoBRA assessment recommendations

### What is the output of this step?

- CoBRA Assessment Report widely disseminated
- CoBRA recommendations applied

### Supporting Documents:

- N/A

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO CONSIDER?



### How often should CoBRA assessments be undertaken?

A single CoBRA assessment can provide a profound and comprehensive baseline understanding of the drivers of local resilience in the target area. Thus, generally, it may not be considered relevant to undertake CoBRA assessments in the same geographic area on a regular basis. However, in some cases it may be viable to repeat the assessment. These may include, for example, the cases when communities start encountering a completely new type of shocks/crises, or livelihood activities in the communities change significantly due to political, socio-economic, environmental and other reasons.

As described previously, the assessment's timing will need to be determined taking into account seasonality, physical accessibility and other factors. Many of the tools used for the previous CoBRA assessment such as the laminated graphics, beans and bean bags, pens, markers and folders, etc. could be recycled. If all/part of the previous assessment field team members participate in the repeat assessment, the field team training may be skipped or shortened to a refresher course to ensure methodological consistency.



## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?



### Disseminate the CoBRA assessment results and findings

As a highly participatory methodology, the results and findings generated from a CoBRA assessment provide valuable insights into community/household perspectives and priorities in building their own resilience. Internal partners with the assessment team can use findings to reflect upon and modify their institutional strategies and programmes as appropriate. In addition, the report can be used as baseline information to support future resource prioritization, mobilization and allocation, M&E, etc.

Any agencies undertaking a CoBRA assessment should ensure that the CoBRA Assessment Report (and/ or the summary report) is shared with as many relevant stakeholders as possible through different channels, to inform resilience-related policies and practical actions broadly. The holistic nature of resilience means that the findings are likely to be of relevance to a wide variety of local actors, including the target communities themselves.



## OUTPUT: COBRA ASSESSMENT REPORT WIDELY DISSEMINATED

### Support the application of CoBRA assessment recommendations

The CoBRA assessment results, findings and recommendations can be used and applied for various purposes. They may, for example, inform and guide resilience-related policymaking, strategic planning, programme/project development and implementation and research. These advocacy, advisory and technical support efforts must go hand in hand with monitoring efforts in order to ensure that the changes in policies and practices (i.e. inputs/ activities) contribute to improvement in the level of resilience to shocks and crises (i.e. results) in the assessment target area.

As illustrated in Figure 4, according to the results-based monitoring model, different types and levels of changes have different timespans as a consequence of certain inputs and activities, encompassing:

- **Outputs:** Deliverable product or service to be brought about as a result of inputs/activities
- **Immediate outcomes:** Short-term change brought about in condition, behaviour, etc. as a result of outputs
- **Mid-term outcomes:** Medium-range change brought about in condition, behaviour, etc. as a result of outputs
- **Impacts:** Long-term consequences or effects contributed by combined activities, outputs and outcomes



**Figure 4** | Different Levels of Results

In one hypothetical case, based on a CoBRA assessment recommendation to enhance support in the education sector, additional resources (i.e. inputs in financial, physical or technical forms) may be brought in and various education sector interventions (i.e. activities such as building and rehabilitation of school facilities, provision of bursary support, training of teachers, etc.) implemented. Examples of expected or desired results based on these inputs and the activities may be as follows:



- **Outputs:** New school facilities built; old school facilities upgraded; bursary programme established; teachers trained
- **Immediate outcomes:** School enrolment rate increased; learning outcomes improved
- **Mid-term outcomes:** Students' entry to higher education increased; youth employment improved in quality and quantity; income sources diversified
- **Impacts:** Household income increased; food security and nutrition enhanced; standard of living improved

In the field of resilience monitoring, dedicated efforts must be made to not only monitor the degree of attainment of these and other (un)intended results over time, but also to track the degree of fluctuation on the attainment rates of results before, during and after shocks and crises. If the degree of fluctuation in certain result indicators is high and the affected communities face challenges in coping with and bouncing back from the effects of shocks/crises to the desired results pathways, it will be necessary to examine the relevance of existing inputs/activities and determine the need for an amended approach, additional support, etc. in view of various internal and external causal factors.

The CoBRA assessment team should work with relevant internal/external partners to agree on the resilience monitoring and evaluation framework: how many results indicators to be used, whom to monitor, how often to collect data, etc. As much as possible, the resilience M&E framework should use existing sectoral data and align with other ongoing regular data collection efforts.

It is important to note that building resilience is in general a complex multidimensional task that tends to take time. Consequently, the CoBRA assessment team and partners should not necessarily expect to see significant results based on single-sector input/activity in the short term. They must acknowledge that monitoring change in overall levels of resilience could be a long-term commitment.



#### OUTPUT: COBRA RECOMMENDATIONS APPLIED



## PHOTO CREDITS

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### **COVER AND BACK PHOTO:**

CoBRA FGD participants in Mangochi district, Malawi, review the resilience statement cards before ranking.

### **PHOTO P. 2:**

Children test the newly installed handpump water supply system in Sudan.

### **PHOTO P. 3:**

CoBRA FGD participants in Zomba district, Malawi, come up with dozens of resilience outcome statements.

### **PHOTO P. 5:**

The participatory nature of CoBRA helps bring communities' honest and frank perspectives into resilience debate.

### **PHOTO P. 9:**

CoBRA Field Team in Uganda undertakes group works as part of the training.

### **PHOTO P.10:**

CoBRA FGD participants present women's overall views and priorities in community resilience building.

### **PHOTO P. 12:**

Community members in Karamoja region, Uganda, prepare for the assessment.

### **PHOTO P. 13:**

CoBRA allows disaster affected communities to describe what resilience means to them and explain what types of interventions are necessary to enhance their resilience.

### **PHOTO P. 14:**

CoBRA Field Team in Kenya discusses the assessment sampling frame.

### **PHOTO P. 19:**

CoBRA facilitators moderate FGD with male community members in Nakapiripirit district, Uganda.

### **PHOTO P. 23:**

CoBRA facilitators guide the FGD members to list key building blocks for community resilience in Zomba district, Malawi.

### **PHOTO P. 24:**

CoBRA trainer provides supervisory support during the trial field data collection in the pilot community.

### **PHOTO P. 26:**

CoBRA facilitator conduct a KII with a nominated resilient household representative.

### **PHOTO P. 31:**

CoBRA Field Team is divided into groups to analyse the assessment results.

### **PHOTO P. 34:**

Intensive CoBRA training build the capacity of the assessment field team for facilitation, listening, and communications.



Empowered lives.  
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